

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Embodiments of the present invention relate to portions of a switch fabric having a single logical stage and at least one physical stage. In addition, the data paths and the control paths of the switch fabric can be decoupled thereby allowing additional processing to be performed than would otherwise be the case with control rates that matched the high data rates. In other words, data cells received on high speed links can be spread over many lower speed links; consequently, the data cells can transit the switch fabric at that high speed while the control information associated with the data can be processed at that lower speed. Because the control information can be processed at a lower speed (associated with the control path), the control information can be processed over a greater period of time.

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